

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-11, 13-15, 17-18, and 20-28 are pending, claims 7, 12, 19, and 29 having previously been canceled and claims 2 and 16 being canceled above. The "final" Office Action allowed claims 22-28 and rejected the remaining claims. More particularly, the Office Action rejected:

- claims 8-11 and 13-14 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter;
- claims 8-11 and 13-14 as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2;
- claims 1, 4, 6-11, 13-15, 18, and 20-21 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Letters Patent 6,148,322 ("Sand *et al.*"); and
- claims 2-3 and 16-17 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sand *et al.* combined with U.S. Letters Patent 5,012,409 ("Fletcher").

Applicant traverses the rejections. Applicant also notes that the case is currently on appeal.

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 15 to incorporate the limitations of claims 2 and 16. Claim 1 has also been otherwise amended to help clarify the language of the claim but not for purposes of patentability. These amendments result for several telephone conferences between the undersigned and the Examiner, culminating in an agreement earlier today regarding the above language of the claims as allowable. No art was cited during these discussions.

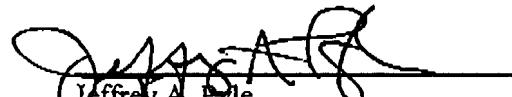
It is respectfully submitted that all claims pending in the present application are in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore request that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (713) 934-4053 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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